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GE Signs \$200 Million Contract for Power Equipment and Services in Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Erbil, Iraq 18 February, 2010 - Building upon existing investments in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, GE has announced that it will supply approximately \$200 million in power generation equipment and services for two independent power plant projects (<http://www.albawaba.com/en/countries/Iraq/261259>) slated to open during the second half of 2010.

The projects in the Dohuk and Suleimani provinces are designed to meet growing energy demands and advance the overall infrastructure in the area. Electricity capacity will increase by approximately 1,750 megawatts (<http://www.albawaba.com/en/countries/Iraq/261259>) upon completion.

Developed by GE partner Mass Global Investment Company, a leader in independent power plants development, six Frame 9E gas turbine-generator units will be provided for the projects-four for the Dohuk plant and two for the plant in Suleimani.

"These two projects are the latest in a series of independent power projects we are developing to help cover the shortage of power within the Kurdistan region. They also support the Kurdistan Regional Government's initiative for the private sector to help meet the energy requirements in this region (<http://www.albawaba.com/en/countries/Iraq/261259>)," Ahmad Ismail, Chairman of Mass Global, said.

Previously, GE and Mass Global partnered to create gas turbines in the Kurdistan Region, adding 1,000 megawatts of generating capacity. This newest investment shows a continuing commitment to Iraq and confidence for the future of the Kurdistan Region.

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*** MEDIA ADVISORY ***

KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT PRESENTS MY KURDISTAN: PAINTINGS OF
KURDISH LIFE AT THE FOUNDRY GALLERY

What:

The Kurdistan Regional Government presents *My Kurdistan: Paintings of Kurdish Life*. The exhibit visualizes all facets of Kurdish life from landscapes, to tribal legends and myths, to contemporary life and to Falah Shwan's powerful painting "War is Different." This exhibit provides the opportunity to see Iraq in a new and different light.

Who:

Kurdistan Regional Government, Falah Shwan, Raouf Hasan, Jamal Mushir, Hekmat Hndi, Sardar Kestai, Kurdo Hasan, Jawhar Mohamad

Where:

The Foundry Gallery
1314 18th Street, NW
202.463.0203

When:

March 3- March 28, 2010 - Hours: Wednesday - Friday 1 - 7 pm and Saturday -
Sunday 12 - 6 pm

Contact:

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Kurdistan Region Begins To Vote In Iraqi Parliamentary Election

ERBIL, IRAQ – 4 March, 2010 – Citizens of Iraq from the Kurdistan Region who live throughout the world will begin registration and voting on Friday to elect the 325 members of the Council of Representatives of Iraq, which will then elect the Prime Minister and the President. The election is planned for the same day as a referendum on the presence of American troops. Out-of-country voting takes place in 16 countries, including the United States, from March 5 to 7. Official voting within Iraq will take place on March 7.

“Iraq’s second Parliamentary elections will be the most important balloting to date for the country,” said Qubad J. Talabani, the Kurdistan Regional Government Representative to the United States. “All of the political parties and candidates are fully vested in the system—unlike in 2005, when the Shiites and the Kurds maintained their own coalitions, and Sunni Arabs boycotted. We now expect Sunni participation, while Shiite and Kurdishi parties will be competing under multiple and separate coalitions.”

The Independent High Electoral Commission, which is running the election, stated a goal of announcing election results three days after the vote on March 10, 2010. An estimated 18.2 million have registered to vote. The Parliament has expanded under election law from 275 to 325 members—equal to one seat per 100,000 voters, as specified in the Constitution of Iraq.

“Just like when the first post-Saddam Iraqi government was formed in 2005, the people of the Kurdistan Region expect Iraq’s federal constitution to guide the way,” Talabani said. “Through all of this, the American people can count on the Kurdish leadership to play a constructive role in forming Iraq’s government. We are a friend of the United States, and have much to thank for as a result of American involvement and U.S. military sacrifice.”

About the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq

The Kurdistan Region is a federal recognized autonomous region in Iraq. With a population of currently around 4 million and rapidly increasing, the three governorates of Duhok, Erbil and Suleimania cover approximately 49,000 square miles. The Kurdistan Region is considered to be the safest, most stable Region in Iraq, and it is host to an ever expanding number of commercial and trade initiatives.

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KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE HALABJA MASSACRE

WASHINGTON, 16 March 2010 – The Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq Representative to the United States, Qubad J. Talabani, released the following statement today in commemoration of the anniversary of the chemical gas attacks against Kurdish civilians in the town of Halabja in 1988:

On this, the 22nd anniversary of the Genocide of Halabja — which took the lives of more than 5,000 Kurdish civilians, including women and children—the people of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq commemorate those innocents lost during this horrific event, as well as the hundreds of thousands of Kurdish lives taken by the atrocities committed against them during the genocidal regime of Saddam Hussein. We also take this opportunity to give thanks to American military forces and to the United States for liberating Iraq and for their continued support for the people of Kurdistan as we seek to contribute to the realization of a stable, federal and democratic Iraq.

The Halabja anniversary is not, however, just a time for the people of the Kurdistan Region to look back. It is a time for us to heal, to seek closure and to look forward. This year in particular represents a singular confluence of what is now behind us—with the execution of Ali Hassan al Majid, or “Chemical Ali”—and what is ahead—with Iraq’s recent parliamentary elections, which will determine the country’s future. The people of Iraqi Kurdistan remain determined in this time. The justice brought to Chemical Ali did not bring rejoicing as much as it did a sober acknowledgment, like with each constitutionally-guaranteed vote we cast, that we are taking real steps to ensure the Iraqi government does not inflict the types of crimes seen by Saddam Hussein’s regime ever again against anyone. The people of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will never forget Halabja.

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Kurdistan Regional Government Commemorates Iraq Liberation Day

WASHINGTON, 9 April 2010 – *Qubad Talabani, the Representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq (KRG) to the United States, today released the following statement in commemoration of Iraq Liberation Day:*

On behalf of the people of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, I extend our deepest gratitude to the United States and the U.S. military for their role in liberating Iraq from tyranny and oppression, and for partnering with us as we build a federal democracy. Thanks to the sacrifices and valor of U.S. and coalition troops—including active duty members, veterans and members of their families—Iraq has achieved many successes. It has drafted and ratified a permanent constitution, conducted two nationwide parliamentary elections, and brought about greater stability. Although much progress still needs to be made, which requires continued support and encouragement from the U.S., Iraq remains grateful for being given the opportunity to determine its own democratic destiny. Today, we celebrate the courage, commitment and sacrifice of all those who have fallen and who continue to fight in support of Iraq's freedom.

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Kurdistan Regional Government Representative Attends Iraq Liberation Day Ceremony

WASHINGTON, 12 April, 2010 – The Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq's Representative to the United States, Qubad Talabani addressed the ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery commemorating Iraq Liberation Day on Friday, April 9. Members of American and Iraqi forces, including members of the Peshmerga, attended the event, alongside veterans and family of those soldiers who have fallen in support of Iraq's freedom.

"On this day, it is appropriate and right for us to commemorate the sacrifices made to liberate Iraq from decades of brutal tyranny under Saddam Hussein," said Mr. Talabani. "So to be absolutely clear: Iraq thanks you. I thank you. And the people of Iraq's Kurdistan Region, most of all, thank you."

During the ceremony, members of American and Iraqi forces laid wreaths at the joint gravesite of fallen soldiers from the U.S. and Iraq. Ms. Hayyam Sami Mahdi Al-Shather and Ms. Debra Argel-Bastian, whose husbands are buried at the site, attended and spoke at the event. Iraqi Air force Captain Ali Abbas Rubaie, Ms. Al-Shathers deceased husband, is the only Iraqi buried at Arlington Cemetery.

Other speakers included General Nasier Arkan Abadi, Vice Chief of Staff, Iraqi Joint Forces of the Republic of Iraq; U.S. Brigadier General Judd Lyons, Adjutant General of Nebraska; and Ms. Wendy Hoffman, National President of Blue Star Mothers of America.

"Today, we must thank those who have helped us get to where we are," Mr. Talabani said. "Because although we face complicated political problems, the majority of the political forces and people who guide Iraqi society want to live in peace. They want to live up to the promise that American forces have given us."

The third annual Universal Remembrance Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery ended with a reading of a keynote address from KRG Minister for Peshmerga Affairs by Representative Talabani.

About the Kurdistan Regional Government

The Kurdistan Region is an autonomous region in federal Iraq. With a population of currently around 4 million and rapidly increasing, the three governorates of Duhuk, Erbil and Sulaimani cover approximately 40,000 square miles. The Kurdistan Region is considered to be the safest, most stable Region in Iraq, and it is host to an ever expanding

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Kurdistan Regional Government Marks Yezidi New Year

WASHINGTON, 14 April 2010 – *The Representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq (KRG) to the United States today released the following statement in commemoration of Red Wednesday, the Yezidi (Ezidi) New Year:*

On behalf of the people of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, I congratulate Yezidis the world over on the Yezidi New Year, or Red Wednesday. In Yezidi tradition, today marks the day Melek Taws descended upon earth as a peacock to endow it with beauty and new life. Just like the multiform colors of the peacock's tail, the Kurdistan Region is vibrant and diverse, and the Yezidi Kurds have made an important contribution to the Region's collective culture. As a day of rebirth, I hope this Yezidi New Year brings with it greater openness and stability for all people throughout Iraq.

Yezidi Background

- The Yezidi Kurds live principally in the Dohuk and predominantly Kurdish areas of Mosul Provinces. Lalesh, the Yezidi Holy Temple is in Shexan.
- Within the Kurdistan Region, there are more than half a million Yezidis, with close to a million settled in other parts of the world.
- Throughout history, Yezidis have been an oppressed people, but possess a rich spiritual tradition that they contend is the world's oldest.
- Red Wednesday is considered to be the holiest day of the year for the Yezidi people.

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